Chapter 6 – Fair Isn’t Always Equal

Abstract

Chapter 6 of *Fair Isn’t Always Equal* by Rick Wormeli concerns how teachers should create good test questions. Many tips were suggested by Wormeli, such as using a variety of questions, making questions clear, avoid using negatives, keeping them short, and many more. Wormeli stresses that it is not fair to trick a student or for them to have to guess what their assessor wants them to say. Tests should be authentic and show what students have learned. Tess sums up the chapter’s theme well when she says, “students grades should not depend on whether or not they can decipher test questions, their grades should reflect their knowledge of the content. (Tess).” To accomplish this teachers should also try and make tests fun and avoid timing tests. To learn more about assessment, and teaching in general, the Association for Middle Level Education has an excellent podcast series here.

Synthesis

It is clear to see that all of us have experienced the misfortune of inefficient tests. There was a general frustration from the class about past teachers that developed tests that were unfair and did not capture their true understanding of the material. Keira mentions that timed tests are dangerous and should be used with caution. Sean, and many others, said how multiple-choice questions can be frustrating if they are left ambiguous. And still more of us talked about how test anxiety can rear its evil head if assessments are not made well. As a whole our class appreciated the tips that Rick Wormeli provided in this chapter. Due to our past experiences many of us vowed to not subject our future students to what we had to go through. Basically, our goal “is to see what [our] students have learned, not to see how good they are at answering [a] confusing test. – Tori. To eliminate the test all together, one may look into Project Based Learning, or PBL.